

# Transactions

SPRING 2011

TRANSPORTATION NEWS

FOR THE NINE-COUNTY

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



## The Man Who Gave the Ed Roberts Campus Its Name

The Ed Roberts Campus has been in the making since 1995, when Roberts died at the age of 56 and Berkeley's civic leaders and members of the disability movement began to look for a fitting and lasting way to commemorate the life and contributions of this extraordinary man.

The polio that paralyzed Roberts from the neck down at the age of 14 turned out to be a catalyst rather than a roadblock



in his life, and he went on to become the first severely disabled student to attend UC Berkeley — where each night he retired to an iron lung in the student health center. A pioneer of the independent living movement, Roberts became the second executive director of Berkeley's Center for Independent Living. Later he was tapped by Governor Jerry Brown to head the state Department of Rehabilitation before returning to the East Bay to found the World Institute on Disability. Fittingly, all three of the organizations where Roberts made his mark are now housed at the campus that bears his name.

Read more about Ed Roberts' life and see a photo gallery at: [mtc.ca.gov/edroberts](http://mtc.ca.gov/edroberts)



Jerry Brown swears Ed Roberts in as director of the California Department of Rehabilitation in 1975, during Brown's first term as California's governor.

### Visiting the Ed Roberts Campus

3075 Adeline Street, Berkeley, CA (at the Ashby BART station)  
Hours: Weekdays, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
510.225.6300  
[Info@edrobertscampus.org](mailto:Info@edrobertscampus.org)  
[edrobertscampus.org](http://edrobertscampus.org)



RON FINGER/IMG ARCHITECTS



TIM GRIFFITH



KARL NIELSEN



TIM GRIFFITH

Upper left: In addition to creating an underground portal to the Ed Roberts Campus at Berkeley's Ashby station, BART erected a welcoming bus shelter at the street level that echoes the building's curvy lines. Upper right: Wood slats along the building's exterior help it fit into the neighborhood. Lower left: The striking spiral ramp is the most obvious universal design feature. Lower right: All comers feel at home in the building's airy atrium lobby.

## Ed Roberts Campus Becomes Mecca for Disability Community

BERKELEY FACILITY TAKES UNIVERSAL DESIGN AND TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT TO NEW LEVELS

At MTC, we know a good idea when we see one. So when a group of community leaders came to the agency in the mid-1990s with a proposal for an innovative building at Berkeley's Ashby BART station to bring under one roof a number of organizations serving the disability community, MTC embraced the concept. Now, after more than a dozen years of planning and fundraising, and 18 months of construction, the Ed Roberts Campus is open for business.

If the 1,000 or so people who gathered in early April to celebrate the opening are any indication, the facility is an instant hit with the disability community.

Named for a prominent and pioneering Bay Area disability activist, the facility gathers under one roof a dozen organizations and agencies involved in education, services, policy and advocacy for the disability community (see list at far right).

A well-marked underground portal leads directly from the ticketing level of the BART station to the basement level of the campus. The connection allows for seamless access on the part of wheelchair users and other disabled residents, who are often transit-dependent.

MTC provided \$100,000 in planning grants early on from its Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) Program to get the project off the ground. MTC eventually directly provided or helped secure \$17 million for the \$47 million project from local, state and federal transportation sources — the largest contribution from a single funder. Additional support came from other federal sources, local agencies, the city of Berkeley, foundations, corpo-



KARL NIELSEN

*"It's really a wonderful example of how when we work together, we can accomplish much for innovation, for civil rights, for equality and for the common good."*

Congresswoman Barbara Lee speaking at the opening celebration.

rations and individuals.

The building exemplifies the spirit of its sponsoring organizations by being a model of universal design — an approach to making products and environments as usable as possible by as many people as possible, regardless of age or ability. "I think this is the first time that universal design has happened at this level, from the ground up," said Dmitri Belser, executive director of the Center for Accessible Technology and president of the Ed Roberts Campus.

Upon entering the low-rise building, visitors are struck by

the originality and centrality of the ramp that gently spirals from the first floor to the second.

"The ramp is designed to be both a practical element for people in wheelchairs, but also a symbolic gesture that is intended to speak to the idea of universal design, that welcomes everyone," said architect Bill Leddy of Leddy Maytum Stacy of San Francisco.

Indeed, at the opening event, both able-bodied and wheelchair-bound visitors enjoyed the leisurely stroll and ride along the sinuous pathway.

The 85,000-square-foot building also incorporates a number of smaller accommodations for disabled clients and staff. For instance, the fountain at the north end of the atrium lobby serves as an acoustical beacon helping to orient vision-impaired visitors. A cement floor provides easy rolling for wheelchair users, while a cloth ceiling helps to soften noise emanating from that hard floor — thereby aiding hearing-impaired users.

"A lot of this is just about creating an environment that is gracious and allows people the ability to live and work with dignity," Leddy said.

— Brenda Kabn



## Meet the Owners/Tenants Of the Ed Roberts Campus

A dozen agencies and organizations are housed at the Ed Roberts Campus, which includes meeting rooms, an exercise studio and a child care center. The founding organizations are:

**Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program** — Provider and promoter of accessible sports and recreation

**Center for Accessible Technology** — Computer training/resources for adults and children with disabilities

**Center for Independent Living** — Peer-based services and advocacy

**Computer Technologies Program** — Job training for people with disabilities

**Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund** — National civil rights law and policy center

**Through the Looking Glass** — Providing services to families with a disabled member, and operating a child care center on the campus

**World Institute on Disability** — Public policy research center

### Other Campus Tenants

**Alameda Alliance for Health**

**California State Department of Rehabilitation**

**The Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program**

**The Lighthouse** — Support for blind and visually impaired individuals

**Toolworks** — Vocational training and placement for people with disabilities

## Get Involved



### Help Shape the Future

Spring brings the one-year birthday of OneBayArea, an interagency effort launched on Earth Day 2010 to create a more sustainable Bay Area. The anniversary coincides with the start of a big push to gather public input on Plan Bay Area, a long-range planning effort that is the primary focus of the OneBayArea consortium. The outreach is both virtual — with an online tool called YouChoose Bay Area — and in-person via a series of public workshops. MTC is one of four partner agencies involved in OneBayArea.

For more information, go to: [OneBayArea.org](http://OneBayArea.org)  
[YouChooseBayArea.org](http://YouChooseBayArea.org)

## Special Event

THURSDAY  
MAY 12, 2011  
17th Annual  
Bike to Work Day



Join thousands around the region who will pedal their way to work, school or errands on May 12, or pick a day in May that works for you. Pledge to bicycle at least once in May, and you'll be eligible for prizes. Better yet, form a team with friends or coworkers, and bike all month long as part of Team Bike Challenge.

Presented by MTC, 511 and Kaiser Permanente with other sponsors. For more information and to register, go to: [YouCanBikeThere.com](http://YouCanBikeThere.com)

## Calendar

For dates, times and locations of upcoming MTC meetings, visit: [mtc.ca.gov/meetings](http://mtc.ca.gov/meetings)



San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge: East Span Update

You Can't Miss It — New Bay Bridge East Span Makes a Towering Statement

If you haven't driven across the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge lately, you will be in for a surprise when you do. The project to construct a new East Span parallel to the old bridge has made impressive progress in the last few months, with the tower now nearly complete and thrusting several hundred feet above the upper deck of the existing bridge.

In an intense, five-day operation in late February and early March, crews installed the last tier of steel legs, bringing the tower height to 480 feet. A trio of finishing touches will bring the tower to its final height of 525 feet above the water line: a grillage tying the four legs into



Now at their full height, the four legs making up the East Span's tapering tower seem to glow in the late afternoon sun.

a single, tapering unit (installed in mid-April); a saddle to cradle the main cable; and a decorative tower head.

All four tiers of tower legs were fabricated at the Zhen Hua Heavy Industry Co. Ltd. in Shanghai, where workers are now busy finishing the last few remaining steel deck pieces for the new East Span. Once the final deck sections are shipped this summer, attention will shift to stringing the cable that will support the new East Span, which will offer several magnitudes of increased seismic safety over the 1930s-era existing East Span.

— Brenda Kahn

Watch the bridge construction in real time at: [bata.mtc.ca.gov](http://bata.mtc.ca.gov)

East Span Traffic Shift

Heads up for a major traffic shift coming in late May at the Oakland end of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Eastbound traffic on the existing bridge will be switched to a bypass so as to accelerate completion of the Oakland touchdown for the new East Span. The latest in a series of traffic shifts that motorists have weathered as part of the complex Bay Bridge seismic safety construction project, this transitioning of traffic to the new lanes will take place without a bridge closure.

Stay tuned to [baybridgeinfo.org](http://baybridgeinfo.org) for updates.

In the News

MTC Seeds Affordable Housing Loan Fund

Transit-oriented development and affordable housing — both key elements of the Bay Area's long-term sustainability equation — are coming together in a creative way with the launch of the Bay Area Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing Fund. Officials from MTC joined with the private and nonprofit sectors in late March to announce the revolving loan program. The setting for the press conference was a parking lot in San Francisco's hard-pressed Tenderloin neighborhood that will soon sprout an attractive, 14-story

apartment complex with 150 affordable family units — to be built with the help of a \$4.8 million loan from the fund.

Earlier in the day of the press event, MTC approved \$10 million in seed money for the \$50 million loan fund; other investors include Morgan Stanley, Citi Community Capital, The Ford Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation and Living Cities. It is expected that the fund will spawn up to 3,800 housing units over its initial 10 years, with the bulk of those for low-income families.



Affordable housing complexes will sprout around the region thanks to the new loan fund. Shown here is a rendering of the first one, to be built in San Francisco.

Facts & Figures

Clipper<sup>SM</sup> Electronic Payment Eclipsing Paper Passes



Use of the Clipper card continues to grow at a rapid pace as additional transit systems join the program and as transit operators shift more of their paper tickets and passes to MTC's electronic fare collection program.

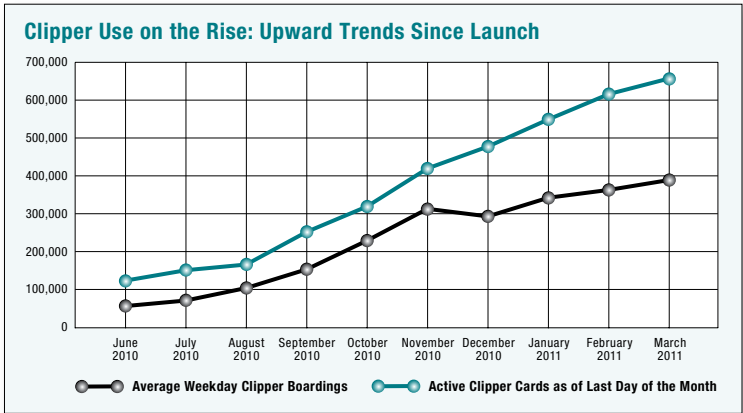
The Clipper system recorded an average of 388,400 weekday boardings in March 2011, a 72 percent increase over the 226,150 average weekday boardings recorded six months earlier in October 2010. By the end of March 2011 there were 664,793 active Clipper cards in use, a 111 percent increase over the 315,551 in use six months earlier.

SamTrans began accepting Clipper in mid-December 2010, while the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority introduced Clipper on its system in mid-February of 2011. They joined six other systems that climbed on board Clipper at its launch in June of 2010: AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, Golden Gate Transit &

Ferry, S.F. Muni, and the Dumbarton Express.

In recent major moves from paper to electronic fare collection, S.F. Muni transitioned its M (Muni-only) monthly pass to Clipper as

Golden Gate Transit also has just installed Clipper-ready ticket vending machines at its ferry terminals. Ticket vending machines in the S.F. Muni Metro likewise dispense and add value to Clip-



of April, while Caltrain stopped selling paper eight-ride tickets and monthly passes in early 2011.

Meanwhile, MTC and Bay Area transit operators are making the acquisition and loading of Clipper cards more convenient. BART recently retrofitted its ticket vending machines at all 44 stations so that customers can use them to add cash value to Clipper cards.

per cards. In February, MTC converted its transit kiosk at the Embarcadero BART station in San Francisco into a full-service Clipper Customer Care Center where riders can trade in damaged cards and get senior/youth cards on the spot. The Bay Crossings Store at the S.F. Ferry Building also is now a full-service Clipper Customer Care Center.

— Brenda Kahn

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